

**What is claimed is:**

1. A method of selecting a font to output a message to a printer, comprising the steps of:
  - (a) evaluating the characters of the message to build a linked list of available system fonts matching the characters; and
  - (b) interrogating font tag information to determine a set of supported output types; and
  - (c) printing the message by traversing the linked list of available system fonts.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the evaluating of step (a) comprises the step of comparing each character of the message in a universal code to a set of available system fonts.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of comparing each character comprises the step of testing the ability of each of the set of available system fonts to express that character.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein the universal code is Unicode.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of (d) generating a code page output corresponding to characters matched to the available system fonts.
6. A system for selecting a font to output a message to a printer, comprising:
  - a processor unit, the processor unit evaluating the characters of the message to build a linked list of available system fonts matching the characters and interrogate font tag information to determine a set of supported output types; and
  - a printer interface, connected to the processor unit, to output the characters of the message to a printer by traversing the linked list of available system fonts.
7. The system of claim 6, wherein the processor unit compares each character of the message in a universal code to a set of available system fonts.
8. The system of claim 7, wherein the processor unit tests the ability of each of the set of available system fonts to express that character.
9. The system of claim 8, wherein the universal code is Unicode.

10. The system of claim 6, wherein the processor unit generates a code page output corresponding to characters matched to the available system fonts.
11. A system for evaluating characters in a message to output to a printer, comprising:
  - processor means, the processor means evaluating the characters of the message to build a linked list of available system fonts matching the characters and interrogating font tag information to determine a set of supported output types; and
  - printer output interface means, connected to the processor means, to output the characters of the message to a printer by traversing the linked list of available system fonts.
12. The system of claim 11, wherein the processor means compares each character of the message in a universal code to a set of available system fonts.
13. The system of claim 12, wherein the processor means tests the ability of each of the available system fonts to express that character.
14. The system of claim 13, wherein the universal code is Unicode.
15. The system of claim 11, wherein the processor generates a code page output corresponding to characters matched to the available system fonts.
16. A storage medium for storing machine readable code, the machine readable code being executable to select a font to output a message to a printer according to the steps of:
  - (a) evaluating the characters of the message to build a linked list of available system fonts matching the characters and interrogating font tag information to determine a set of supported output types; and
  - (b) outputting the message by traversing the linked list of available system fonts.
17. The storage medium of claim 16, wherein the evaluating of step (a) comprises the step of comparing each character of the message in a universal code to a set of available system fonts.

18. The storage medium of claim 17, wherein the step of comparing each character comprises the step of testing the ability of each of the set of available system fonts to express that character.
19. The storage medium of claim 18, wherein the universal code is Unicode.
20. The storage medium of claim 16, further comprising the step of (c) generating a code page output corresponding to characters matched to each of the available system fonts.